

A  
**LETTER**

Written by a

**MINISTER,**

For the Satisfaction of a

**P E R S O N**

Doubting in

**RELIGION.**

Shewn to be Unsatisfactory.



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*Tr. 162*

LETTER

MINISTERS

OF THE

RELIGION

OF THE UNITED STATES

AND

OF THE

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TO THE  
READER.

**I** Know it will be expected by the Reader, I should inform him what it was that occasion'd these following Papers. J. W. a young man of Preston in Lancashire, fell into some doubts about the main concern of his Soul, Whether he had hitherto the right Faith, or were in the true Church. Mr. T. B. whose Parishioner he was, us'd his best endeavours to dissuade him from embracing the Catholic Communion. For which I should not commend him, for it was precise duty in him, in case he verily judg'd the Negatives, in which Protestants differ from Catholics were True, and that he had any solid Grounds for judging so. Nay, he offer'd too to dispute with any Roman-Catholic before him, to settle his Doubts, and give him satisfaction that the Protestant Religion was True: which was a very fair Proffer, had it been as candidly perform'd. Whereupon I was invited to give him a meeting; And when I came, to make the Dis-

## To the READER.

*pute short, I began with the first Principle in Controversie, The Rule of Faith. I told him, that all our Contest was summ'd up in this one Enquiry, What it was that Christ and his Apostles taught; and that if the Rule which was to acquaint us with, that, were not absolutely or infallibly Certain, all our Faith must by consequence be Uncertain, and might possibly be an Error. I alledg'd, that all His Rule that grounded His Perswasions about what was Faith, depended on Interpretations of Scripture, made by himself or the Protestant Church; both which being confessedly fallible, or possible to be deceiv'd, he might possibly, (that is, perhaps was actually) in an Error as to all his Faith for ought he or they knew. When I expected an Answer, he stept to his Study, and fetcht down a great Book, biding me read that, and offering me to lend it. I admir'd at this strange method of answering, that instead of replying, when he was prest by my Reasons, he could think it a competent satisfaction to tell me, he would lend me a Book to Read. Whereupon I prest him for a positive Reply to my Discourse, telling him, that since he had now Preach't a Doctrine, pretended to be Christ's, so many years, it was incredible he should not be able to give*  
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## To the READER.

*an account of his Faith, and the Ground it was built on, without the assistance of a Voluminous Book; the tossing over which I saw was very convenient for him, to avoid answering, and to turn our Dispute into an endless Wrangling, (which was all he aim'd at) but never to bring the point to any Issue. He still insisting upon my Reading that huge Book, I desir'd him to turn to any particular place in it, which he would undertake, gave an Answer to my former Discourse, and I would be contented to excuse him, and consider what it said. But it would not be granted; so that I saw plainly, this was onely an invention to ward the blow from himself, and let it fall upon another. I prest him again, to make out to us by Grounds of His, he could be absolutely certain of any one point of Faith, nay, even that Christ was God. He reply'd, he believ'd it, because it was in the Creed. I could have told him, the Socinians grant those words in the Creed; and yet deny Christ to be truly God; but I wav'd this, and urg'd him to declare upon what inerrable Rule he believ'd what was contain'd in the Creed. Upon this, to avoid answering, he began the most disingenuous cavil that ever man heard; and fell upon me*

*as.*

## To the READER.

*as if I believ'd not the Creed my self; whereas I only prest him to show us by His Grounds, or by any Rule of Faith proper to Protestants, as they are distinct from Catholics, how He could rationally believe even the Creed to be certain, and know the certain sense of it, since it's Letter is as liable to misconstructions as the Scripture is. I could do no less than tell him, how unhandsome this procedure was, to put upon me without the least show of reason or common sense, a thing that never yet was said or thought of any Roman Catholic in the World. But he with much heat, still insisted, that I did disbelieve it, because I urg'd him to show how by His Principles He did or could believe it; and fell into a high passion. Upon which perceiving plainly, that all this pother and dust was rais'd, to get clear of disputing, and despairing to bring him to give any account of his Faith, even so much as pretending to show it to be as true Faith ought to be, Infallibly certain, I came away with the young man, he having first declar'd before Mr. T. B's. face, that he was fully satisfi'd, he could give no account of his Faith, and consequently was not to be follow'd: and upon this became a Catholic.*

*These*

## To the READER.

*These things having past on in this manner here related, as soon as I saw a Paper from him, to the young man, which here follows, I durst have sworn it had been some Account of the Certainty of his Faith, in regard that was still incumbent on him, having been left in so great a passion about that Point at our last Interview. But, it seems it was too hard a morsel for his tender skill to nibble upon; and instead of that, other points, though never so remote, are fetcht in by head and shoulders to keep off that discourse. How ill he handles these too, will appear by the following Answer. But all these diversions shall not serve his turn. That is, the point about which our Discourse was then, 'tis that which stuck on his side; 'tis that concerning which he yet owes satisfaction; and consequently, 'tis that to which with all right and reason, I must still demand an Answer, and challenge him to run the Lists if he do not perform it.*

P. I.



Mr. T. B.'s PAPER  
To J. W.

PRESTON, Aug. 3. 1686.

*Poor Soul,*

**I**T is now more than fix Weeks since I observed your Apostatizing from our Church ; during which time, I have not been remiss in praying for your Recovery ; and now think it feasonable, by this short Paper, to endeavour it.

The pretended cause is , you cannot obtain satisfaction among us, about those two points, *Transubstantiation* and *Purgatory*, (but mostly the former.)

Your Soul being (in my opinion) in great danger by the course you take, I could not (with any quiet) see you so expose your self; and wished that you might rather bestow your thoughts , on what more immediately touched you , and was more suited to your Capacity : But seeing it verified in you (which is in most persons) that you are most busie about what least concerns you ; and

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nothing



nothing pleaseth your Fancy, but what flies above your Understanding. I purposed to let you know my thoughts (even) in the remote question of *Transubstantiation*; of which, if you make good use, I shall proceed to the latter.

Yet I deferred the thing, till I could learn, that the Person on whose Ability you lean, (*viz.* Mr. G.) was returning from *London*, that he might be near at hand to furnish you with Answers; to the intent I should not be calumniated, as a Designer to surprize and lurch you.

Wherefore I now send these few Lines, to desire you to provide your self of a satisfactory resolution about this Question, or let me receive intimation how that satisfaction doth arise. I abridge you not of liberty to consult with any other person that may add any thing to Mr. G. for I love Truth, and am loath you should be carried away with Falshood: and nothing will more content me, than to receive an Answer of weight to this Paper; which shall (at this time) onely touch a few doubts, many more being reserved to be proposed when these are cleared.

At present I must tell you, 1. What you are (or must be) taught to Believe. 2. How hard

hard it will be for you to Believe what you shall be so Taught.

In the former, I'll note the Doctrines Taught, and the Method of Teaching them. The latter, *viz.* the Method, I begin with.

That you may believe, your Mind must be abstracted (as much as possible it may) from the judgment of your own Senses. Now this method will be hard for you to submit to, when you consider that it is about their proper object, and your Senses duly disposed to give their judgment; and the common Senses of Mankind concurring with yours.

But yet this will be yet harder to digest, seeing this new method is directly contrary <sup>John 20. 27.</sup> to the method which Christ used to instruct <sup>John 1.</sup> Thomas; which was not to abstract his Mind from the judgment of his Senses, but to employ his Mind about the judgment of his Senses. The method also of St. *John*, is not to abstract from the judgment of the Senses, but he appeals to the judgment of the Senses, to beget and confirm Faith. Hence therefore the first Question will arise :

1. *Quest.* Why the method of your new Teachers, is so opposite to the method of Christ and his Apostles ?

Now to the Doctrines taught.

Three things most admirable are effected in the *Eucharist*, by the words of Consecration, which the Catholick Faith believes and confesseth without any doubting.

1. That the true Body of Christ, even the same which was born of the Virgin, and now sits in Heaven at the right hand of the Father, is contained in the Sacrament.

2. That no substance of the Elements remains in it.

3. That the Accidents which are perceived by the Senses, are, in a wonderful and inexplicable manner, without any subject-matter: the substance of the Bread and Wine are so changed, that they wholly cease to be; but the Accidents (even all of them) of the Bread and Wine, you may see and perceive, which inhere in no substance, but consist by themselves. The proof of this follows.

Now the words of Christ are so plain (in this matter) that none in his sound mind can be ignorant, what he must understand when he hears, *This is my Body*.

Also the words of Paul are plain, 1 Cor. 11. *Let a man examine, &c. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation*

*nation to himself, not discerning the Lords body.*  
 For what need is there of such weighty words,  
 if there were nothing in the Sacrament, but a  
 memory and sign of Christ's Passion, as Here-  
 ticks teach? The same thing *Paul* more at  
 large explained in these words: *The cup of*  
*bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the communi-*  
*cation of the blood of Chriſt?*

You hear the Doctrine and the Proof of  
 it from Christ and *Paul*; now for the expli-  
 cation of these words, to make out the proof.

These places of Scripture, must be so ex-  
 plained by the Pastors, and this must chiefly  
 be taught, that nothing of doubtfulness or  
 uncertainty is left (of what was above-said)  
 especially when the Authority of the Church  
 of God hath interpreted these things: the  
 knowledge of which we attain two ways.  
 1. When we consult with the Fathers who  
 flourished from the beginning of the Church,  
 and so downward. 2. When we see the  
 contrary Opinion condemned.

This Doctrine thus proved by Scripture,  
 and the Scripture they explained you must  
 believe. Now to shew how hard it will be  
 for you to believe this, these following Que-  
 stions are proposed.

1. *Quest.*

1 *Quest.* Whether the words of Christ being Spiritual, it may not suffice to take them in a Spiritual Sense, but it be necessary to take them in the literal sense of his natural body, and that without a Figure ?

2 *Quest.* Whether the first Article be not sufficiently believed, when the Body of Christ is believed to be really truly present, even the same Body, but not in the same manner ?

3 *Quest.* Whether the second and third Articles be of equal Truth and Certainty with the first, and must so be believed ?

4 *Quest.* Whether the words cited for proof, are intended to prove all Three Articles equally, or the First only, and the Second and Third are left to shift for themselves ?

5 *Quest.* Whether every one in his wits can see such inforcement in the words of Christ or *Paul*, without the especial helps of the Churches Authority and the Fathers ?

6 *Quest.* If not, then whether Reason wil-  
leth that not the Church in the Apostles time,  
should be principally heard in this Authori-  
tative Interpretation ?

7 *Quest.* Whether you are truly taught  
that we Hereticks say, That in the Sacrament  
there is nothing else but a Memory and a  
Sign



Sign of Christs Passion? And whether the Fathers that prove there is something more, and condemn such as say there is nothing more, do prove any thing against us, or do condemn us?

I should now think it reasonable to request of you to return to us, until these difficulties be overcome. But if Mr. G. will not yield to this request, then I pray you, improve all your interest with him for some satisfaction for your self and me, what is his true and serious sense of this whole matter, and put him to it on his own behalf in this manner, viz.

*Sir, seeing if I eat unworthily, I eat judgment to my self. If I discern not the Lords Body in eating, I eat unworthily. If I discern not the very same Body form'd in the Womb, &c. If I discern not accidents without a substance, &c. I discern not the Lords Body.*

Therefore, that I may be confirmed, I beseech you assure me concerning your self, who are strong in Faith, whereas I am but weak. Your self, who know your own intention in Consecrating, whereas I know it not. Your self, who have looked upon and examined the Elements that they are not corrupted, whereas I have not. Your self, who have uttered the words of Consecration, whereas I perhaps, heard

heard not, perhaps understood not. I say,  
 That you your self are so right in your wits,  
 as to perceive no doubt, nor uncertainty in  
 this matter, but that you do fully, absolute-  
 ly, and without reservation, forever renounce  
 all your part and hope in the Body and Blood  
 of Christ, if this Sacrament now by you Con-  
 secrated, be not the very same natural flesh  
 and natural Blood, which was formed in the  
 Virgins Womb, hung upon the Cross, was bu-  
 ried, arose, and now ~~is~~ at Gods right hand ;  
 but is so changed, that upon the speaking of  
 the words, here's no more substance of Bread  
 and Wine, but the Smell, Colour, Form, and  
 all other Accidents of Bread and Wine are  
 truly remaining, without any subject matter  
 for them to remain in. That your Eyes, Nose,  
 Hands, Palate, do deceive you in their judg-  
 ment about the substance, but at the same  
 time, do not deceive you about the Accidents  
 of Bread and Wine.

I beg that you will press him for a clear re-  
 solution of the former Questions, and this last  
 especially, as touching himself, and transmit it  
 to me; which shall ever be acknowledged  
 your kindness to me, as well as justice to  
 your self.

T. B.

An

P A P E R.

I Received a Paper of yours, to which you require a *Satisfactory* Answer, and desire earnestly of your Friend to *press* me for a *Clear Resolution*. I must in the first place acknowledge very heartily, that you are the most civil Adversary I ever yet met with: For, you are so far from *attacking* me rudely, or *pressing* me with any *Argument*, as other brisker Disputants use, that you do not so much as attempt to *offer* any, nor scarce advance one single Proposition; nay, not so much as put down your own Tenet expressly: Which certainly is the most civil way of *Disputing* that ever was heard of, if indeed it may be allow'd that Name, and

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ought not rather be call'd a *saying just Nothing* ; all your performance in this Paper, being (as you here tell us) to *touch a few Doubts* ; and I must confess, you *touch* them very gingerly ; I suppose, lest being *prest*, they should discover their *soft temper*.

Your gentle way of setting upon me, is to *ask me Questions* : I will not object the Proverb, That a *Fool may ask more Questions, than a Wise man can answer* ; for it neither suits with you nor me. Not with you ; for, by proceeding in this method, you shew your self a deep Politician, and keep out of the reach, nay out of the possibility of a Confutation : since no man living knows how to take hold of an Adversary, who *affirms* nothing himself, but onely *asks* another. Onely I must say, this way of handling Controversie, by *Catechizing* your Adversary, instead of *Arguing* against him, is an invention so pleasant and surprizing, so new and so unheard of to the dull World hitherto, that you have all the right and reason in the World to get a Patent for it, that none may use it without your License. Nor will that Proverb sute with me ; for I hope you are well satisfied, you shall never fail of an Answer

swer from me, when you produce any substantial proofs, since you see I have that respect for you, as to undergo here, for your sake, the drudgery to sweep down your very Cobwebs.

Now, your Arguments being so perfectly unconquerable; (for they are altogether invincible) it was but reason you should say, that no less than *an Answer of weight to this Paper*, would content you. Though I cannot comprehend the Mystery, why the Answer needs be so *weighty*, when there is nothing but a few *feathers* and *straws* in the counterballance; yet I must seriously grant, that 'tis in some cases requisite, that Questions should be askt when the Adversary's Tenet is not well understood; that so the Arguments may not be wrong levell'd against some position, which perhaps he neither holds nor maintains: For this gives the Arguer a right aim; and makes clearer way for the future Dispute. But, alas! your modest way of arguing has no such high ambition; for you tell us here very learnedly; *This Paper shall only touch a few Doubts, many more being reserv'd to be propos'd, when these are clear'd.* So that for anything I see or am to expect,



your intention is onely to go on *asking Questions* to the end of the Chapter, and so turn the *Controversie* into a meer *Catechism*, consisting onely of Questions and Answers; onely you provide wisely, that your self bear the easier and more honourable part in the Dialogue, and assuming to your self the magisterial Office of the *Catechist*, make me the poor ignorant Catechumen, to be pos'd at your pleasure.

But I beseech you, Sir, (that we may be a little serious) what needs this fluttering about with *Questions*, and other frivolous pretences, as if you were ignorant what I held about *Transubstantiation*, or what the person concern'd, is to hold for Faith? You know well enough before-hand, 'tis already publickly extant in the Council of *Trent*; so that you might have sav'd all this sleeveless labour, and have fallen to work with your Arguments, to combat its Definition in this particular point. If you overthrow that, you reduce *St. M.* and make a Proselyte of me too; if you do not, we both stand where we were, and all your feeble Talk is utterly insignificant. This Council is received, as to matters of Faith, by the whole diffusive Body

dy of all those particular Churches in Communion with the *Roman*, and proceeds all along upon the Rule of Catholic Faith, *Tradition*. If you will go to work like a Controvertist, you ought to impugn her and us by Scripture, interpreted by as great Authority, proceeding upon that Rule, or some other more certain: for all Arguments of less weight, cannot with any shew of Reason, pretend to shock her or the Faith she recommends; and all your other Proofs (had you any) would be but running voluntary divisions upon your own Fancy. If then you have the least hope to gain credit to your explications of Scripture, which are contrary to hers, it were advisable you should first shew evidently to the World, what *Natural Means* you have above the whole Body of the Roman Catholic Church, enabling you to understand Scripture better than she does: Or, if you pretend to *Supernatural Gifts* above her, shew us some Supernatural outward Testimony, certifying us of this invincible qualification you lay claim to. If you do either of these, you will do wonders; but I am sure, and your self is conscious, you are so utterly unable to manifest that your self,

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or the Protestant Church have either of these advantages above the Catholic, that, as it was never attempted, though it would most highly avail your Cause, could you compass it, so the very going about it, would shame the Attempter. And, unless you do this, what man in his wits will believe you understand Scripture better than that Great and most Learned Body of the Roman Catholic Church? This being as absurd, as to think a man may compass an End better without better means; that is, as to that degree which is *better*, without means. This is your Duty, Sir, if you hope to gain any credit to your Cause, or would shew your self a Controvertist: But I perceive you have been so accustomed to Preaching, where you have your full swing in the Pulpit, to talk on any fashion against the abominable Papists, without any to controul you; that you have conceiv'd some hope the same will pass in Controversie: Wherefore I must take the freedom to tell you, 'tis the duty of a Controvertist, to propose his or his Adversary's Tenet clearly, and state the Question between them; and then bring his Proofs, and vouch them to be Conclusive. This is what becomes

comes a Man, and a Scholar ; and what falls short of this, though it may pass, (and perhaps with applause) in a *Sermon*, is perfectly ridiculous and insignificant in a *Controversie*. But 'tis high time now to remember the drudging Service I promised you.

Passing by then your old saying, that the Person seeking satisfaction about Transubstantiation *least concern'd* him; as if it were nothing to him, whether he Ador'd a piece of Bread *with* Christ, or Christ *alone*, I come to your *Stuff*; for I want another proper word to call it by, being forbid by common sense to call it *Reasoning*.

You give us a taste of your Philosophy, in speaking so soberly of *the Judgment of Senses*, *our Senses giving their Judgments*, and many other expressions of the like nature. By which you seem to make account a man's Judgment lies in his Heels or Toes, or his Wits in his Elbows; for all these have Sense: And, according to this new Scheme of Philosophy you have enlightned the world with, the *Sense judges*. I wish, for your own sake, you had onely askt Questions here too; for you are as miserably out in your Philosophy, as in your Divinity. As to

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to this whole business then, you may please to receive these few Instructions from a Friend. 1. That the Senses are onely Organs or Instruments to transmit Impressions to the Brain, and so to the Soul, onely which *judges or knows*: and if the way to the Brain be intercluded, no knowledge is produc'd by any impression on *Sense*. 2. That if the Senses be duly dispos'd, 'tis granted they send right impressions thither. 3. That 'tis granted, *à fortiori*, that if the Senses be not vitiated by some Disease, or Miracle do not intervene, they never give our Judging Power wrong Advertisements concerning their *proper* Objects. 4. That, in our case they are employ'd about their Proper Objects, which are certain Accidents or Qualities, as all Philosophers agree: Nor are they in our case fallacious in representing them. Now you would make *Substance* their Proper Object, and would have them inerrable in *judging of Substances*: Of which Positions, the first is utterly false, since all Learned men in the World agree, that *Substance* or *Being* is the proper Object of the *Understanding*. The second is confuted by experience; for we see that in debased Money (for example) and



and many other Instances, even *all* the Senses may deceive us in our judging of the Substance of it by their Impressions; so that we are forc'd to call to our assistance the Maxims of our Reason, and use our best Art to frame a right Judgment in such cases. 5. Amongst those Knowledges, of which, in our case, the Faithful are to make use to judge rightly of the Substance; the Knowledge that God has revealed, 'tis his Body, and that this is attested by his Church, proceeding on an inerrable Rule of Faith, deriving down to us Christ's Doctrine, is to be taken in for one, nay ought to have the chiefest Place; and, so, in due reason ought to restrain the Faithful from judging of this high Mystery, according to the ordinary methods of Nature in other common Natural Effects. 6. That Faith comes by *Hearing*; which Sense, employ'd about Sounds articulated, and complex with an almost infinite variety, I could (were the place proper) demonstrate to be more certain, than all the rest of the Senses put together; unless perhaps the Eyes employ'd about the various figuration of Letters. So that you ought not to have impos'd upon us, to deny the Certainty of *all* the Senses, but to have excepted

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that of *Hearing*, conversant in the Objects now spoken of; especially (as the Scripture tells you) this being the proper Sense by which *Faith comes*, you ought in justice to have let the World know, that we allow indeed the absolute Certainty of that Sense which introduces *Faith*, and deny only the Certainty of some of the rest in some Cases, and in Objects which are not *proper* to them: this being indeed the true state of our Tenet. Now, if *Hearing* alone can teach us Christ's Doctrine with a perfect Certainty, 'tis neither good Manners to his Infinite Veracity, nor Justice to such a vast Body of Attesters, nor in any regard common sense to trust the more fallacious Senses, especially, not employ'd neither about their Proper Objects, before the more certain one, employ'd about it's, assuring us God has said it. Remember the Check St. *Thomas* had, for not believing upon the Testimony of others, to be credited as to their veracity (that is, not admitting *Faith* propos'd and ascertain'd to him by *Hearing*, but he would needs use the other Senses too) *Beati qui non viderunt & crediderunt*, and apply it to your self.

7. You distinguish not between the Senses,

ses employ'd about the Motives antecedent to Faith, and about the Myſteries of Faith, as appears by your Citations out of Scripture. In the former, it becomes God's Providence to leave Nature to its free courſe, and us to judge according to its ordinary methods, in regard we have as yet no other Light to walk or judge by. But when once through *Hearing* we are enlightned by Faith, it becomes then God's Providence, that the Myſteries propoſ'd to us (they having a nearer approach to an Infinite Agent, the Omnipotence of God, than Natural Productions have) ſhould be ſo ſublime, as to be above the reach even of unelevated *Reason*, much more above the common and coarſe methods of Senſation, or the Judgments we frame from the Senſes alone. Pauſe upon theſe particulars, and apply them, and you will ſee you are quite out in what I conceive you *would be at*; for you *are at* nothing yet but at asking Questions.

But you divide your Text, and tell *J. W.* firſt, *What 'tis he muſt be taught*; and (ſecondly) *How hard it will be to believe it*. Then, as to the former, you ſeem to ſubdivide it into the *Doctrines Taught*, and the *method of Teaching them*. Now the *Doctrines*  
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taught.

*taught*, was the *Genus* or Thing to be divided, and here you seem to make it one of the *Species* or Members dividing; and so make it at once *above* and *under* it self: But this is onely a slip of your Logick, *noting* (as you call it) *the Doctrines Taught*, as one of the things to be considered in *the Doctrines Taught*. And, certainly, such a rare Note is well worth the marking.

By what's said above, the Reader will see, what a heedless Quoter of Scripture you are, though it be your best or rather onely Talent. You alledge against us, 1 *John* 1. v. 1. where the first words are, *Quod audivimus*, *That which we have heard*; as if we forbid you to use your *Hearing*, by which *Faith* comes. For it is evident beyond all need of Proof, that as the Church *heard* Christ, so in every succeeding Age had follow'd what they *heard* from the former, Christian Faith must have continu'd till now the self-same the Apostles heard from Christ; and, as long as this Method (call'd by us *Tradition*) is follow'd, it must ever continue still the self-same to the Worlds End. Now we are so far from bidding you not follow the Advertisements of your Senses, that our onely

Quarrell

Quarrel to you is, that you relinquish the most certain *Sense*, the *Hearing* your Lawful Pastors in the Church you left, and fell to scan Mysteries of Faith by the less-certain ones, employed about Objects not within their cognizance, and (which is as absurd) Glossing Scripture-Texts, without any Rule to guide you, but your own awkward Fancies.

Next follow in your Papers, the *Doctrines* taught with Proofs, which properly and directly belong onely to the first Article, *viz.* That the True Body of Christ is contained in the Sacrament. But such as your self will never be able to disprove, *viz.* the Scripture interpreted by the Church, the Testimonies of Fathers witnessing the Tradition of the Church in their time, and the Condemnation of the contrary Opinions denying the Real Presence, and *Transubstantiation*, as Heretical.

What should move you thus to shew the weakness of your own Cause, which has no other Rule of your Faith, but Scripture interpreted by every man's Private Spirit or Reason, and can bear no proportion with that of the publick Interpretation of the Church, attested by the Authority of the most



most Eminent Fathers of the Primitive Times, and strengthened by the Condemnation of the contrary Heresies, I cannot easily imagine ; but finding them too strong to be combated by so weak a Champion, you fairly take leave of them, and betake your self to shew in the next place, after your fashion, that is, blindly, how *hard* it will be to believe this Doctrine by *asking* us *Questions*. And I must confess, 'tis most insuperably hard, if *Senses* must be admitted to *Judge* of the hidden and most abstruse Mysteries of Faith, which is your darling Method ; though any wise man would think, this would turn *Faith* into *Experimental Knowledge*, and so rather destroy all the Faith in the world. But my Task is set, and I must attend to your Questions.

To the first then I answer, That the words, *This is my Body*, are to be taken *Literally*, and yet the *End* of receiving, is meant *Spiritually* : And, I farther say , That this *Spiritual Nourishment* consisting in raising in us devout Affections, is incomparably advanc'd by the *Real Presence* of Christ's Body and Blood : So that these two are so far from being inconsistent, as you would hint, that the taking the words *Literally*, does exceedingly con-

conduce to the *Spiritual* feeding on Christ ; even as far as the believing him really *present*, is more apt to stir up Devotion in us, than the not believing it; or the receiving his *Real Body*, is above the receiving a *piece of Bread* signifying it, which is beyond all proportion.

To the second Question, I answer affirmatively, If we regard the point of the *Real Presence* precisely : For we grant, that 'tis sufficient to believe the *Body of Christ* is really truly present, even the same Body, but not in the same manner. 'Tis the very Doctrine of the Council of Trent it self, *Sess. 13. cap. 1.* That the Body of Christ is in Heaven, *juxta modum existendi naturalem.* (according to its natural manner of existing) and yet that 'tis in other places, *Sacramentaliter præsens*, present Sacramentally. But I much fear you are not in earnest here, when you seem to yield 'tis really truly present, but that this Kindness of yours, will grow cold, when it comes to the trial; and that these hearty expressions will dwindle away into Christ's Body, being here onely in a *Sign*; which is to say, the *Sign* is there, and his *Body absent*. Hollow words are but wind, and 'tis hard to grasp Air.

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To the Third, asking whether the Second and Third Article you put, be of equal Truth and Certainty with the First, I answer, That I was never taught to believe a thing as a half-Truth, or a three-quarter Truth, but all to be True, (for Truth consists in an Indivisible) which the Church has expressly declared to be of Faith, by a General Council; and accordingly, whatsoever the Church thus believes, and proposes as an Article of Faith, I absolutely believe and embrace as Truths delivered by Christ and his Apostles.

To the Fourth I answer, as above, That the Proofs you set down, belong properly and directly only to the first Article. And as for the Second and Third, they may also shift well enough for themselves, for any Authority or Reason you have brought against either the one or the other. But I would gladly know, how all your Faith will shift for it self, having nothing to keep it from sinking into an inferiour Assent (call'd *Opinion*) nay into a mass of senseless Errours, as far as it opposes *Tradition*, but your self, and other Fallible Interpreters like your self to buoy it up.

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As for your Fifth, I know no *enforcement* that is beyond Cavil in any one place of Scripture which is Dogmatical, while the words are left to be tost by Criticisms, Grammar-learning, Allusions of places to one another, and such like little tricks. No one word in those Sacred Books can escape being equivocal or double fenc't, while the word [ *God* ] which of all others should seem incommunicable, is Wier-drawn by such shifts to signifie a *Creature*, as we experience in the *Arians* and *Socinians* glosses upon those Texts which concern Christ's Divinity. You know well enough already, that neither my self, nor any Catholic builds our Faith upon any Text of Scripture, interpreted by our own private Fancy, but onely by the publick Tradition of the Church.

Your Sixth asks, *If the Church must be taken in to expound Scripture, whether Reason willeth not, that the Church in the Apostles time, should be principally heard in their Authoritative Interpretation?* I answer, In case you mean the Apostles were of greater Authority than their Successors, 'tis granted: But if your Question relates to the Truth

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of what the Church delivers, 'tis the same as to ask, whether the Holy Ghost, that assists the Church, spake truer one time than another.

Your Seventh Question, whether you are truly represented, by putting you to say, *There is nothing else in the Sacrament, but a Memory and Sign of Christ's Passion; and whether the Fathers that prove there is something more, and condemn such as say there is nothing more, do prove any thing against you, or condemn you.* I am heartily glad to see some glimmering hope of your Conversion: For in case there be in the Sacrament, *something more than a Sign*, as you seem here to acknowledge is your true Tenet, you must say the *thing signify'd* is there too, and so we are good Friends. But, because this unexpected Confession of yours, like the first News in a Gazette, *needs a Confirmation*, I beseech you to satisfy me clearly, what this *Thing* is in the Sacrament, which is *more, or more than a Sign*: This way of questioning, is the worst way of explaining in the world, though it be a special stragem to avoid Confute.

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Your Proposals that follow, are very Extraordinary. I little thought that when you had done *Catechizing* me, you would put me to *Swearing*; nor that, when I expected *Arguments* from another, I should be forced to take my *Oath* my self, that my Faith is true. But that you may have no cause to complain, I will gratifie you in that too, and do here frankly declare, without any Equivocation (which I abhor in an Oath) that I do renounce all my hopes of Heaven, (which is more than you put me to) provided there be no fault in the matter, nor in the Priest, if there be not present in the Sacrament, after the words of Consecration, Christ's very true Body, which was born of the Virgin, suffer'd on the Cross, was buried, arose, and now sits at God's right hand, and this by the Conversion of the whole Substance of the Bread into his Body, as also of the Wine into his Bloud, the Species onely of Bread and Wine remaining, as is declared in the Council of *Trent*, Sess. 13. Can. 2. But now, Sir, having done this, take notice, that I must in requital challenge from you the same deep Pro-

testation, that your *Negative* Faith or Opinion is True. If you refuse, since your exacting it of me, has made it decent, equitable, and just, you are convinced to be a very ill man, and to doubt of the Faith you profess to hold your self, and propose to others as the way to Salvation. And, if you do it, yet acknowledge your own Interpretations of Scripture, and your Churches too (which grounds all your Faith) to be Fallible, you are one of the boldest and rashest Swearers that ever called himself a Christian; and in either case, must lose your credit for ever with your Flock and Auditory.

But that we may draw to a Conclusion, I beseech you, Sir, if you have any more to say to me, let's have no more of this trifling. Consider what you are about: you are about Controversie, whose work it is to settle Christian Faith upon certain Grounds; and since you profess your Faith to have been taught by Christ, this is requir'd of you, if you have any such Faith to settle, or Grounds to settle it on. Go to work like a Scholar, and do not thus expose your self for  
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Children to laugh at. Lay your Principles first, then draw your Consequences; warrant them rightly deduc'd, and bring them to the Conclusion; or the Position that is contradictory to your Adversaries Tenet. 'Tis manly to affirm confidently what one holds heartily; 'tis becoming a Man to argue against your Adversary smartly, and not to spare him: but 'tis the height of ridiculousness, to task him only with Questions, and putting him to make sacred Protestations, instead of combating him with your Reasons: Whenas you knew well enough before-hand, what he holds, and what he would Answer. One thing I must needs re-mind you of at parting, because I fear you will be apt to forget it; which is, that you bear in memory the Oath you owe me, that your Tenets are True; that is, That Christ's True Body is *not* in the Sacrament; That there is *no* Third or Middle State called Purgatory, *no* Transubstantiation, &c. Then to uphold the Opinion of your Sincerity, let us know what Certain Grounds you confide in, to secure you from

from being Perjur'd. The taking this Test, may qualifie you in time for some great Office; for if your Fallible Principles, will justifie your Honesty in taking such an Oath, I do not know what you may not be fit for next.

**FINIS.**

